

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 STRE-00 FEA-01 CIAE-00  
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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3097

UNCLAS TOKYO 18262

PASS STR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, EFIN, ETRD, PFOR, JA, US

SUBJECT: PRESS COMMENTS ON RIVERS' TOKYO VISIT

1. SUMMARY: JAPANESE PRESS FOLLOWED RIVERS TRADE DISCUSSIONS FAIRLY ACCURATELY. THE FEW EDITORIALS COMMENTING ON THE TRADE TALKS WERE CRITICAL OF U.S. REQUEST THAT JAPAN MOVE INTO TRADE DEFICIT WITHIN A YEAR AND THAT JAPAN AIM FOR A 7 - 8 PERCENT GROWTH RATE. GENERALLY, EDITORIALS WERE SYMPATHETIC TO U.S. POSITION. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESS COVERAGE ON THE RIVERS VISIT WAS MOSTLY FACTUAL BUT SOMETIMES ADOPTED A SENSATIONALIST APPROACH BEFORE TALKS BEGAN IN TOKYO. REPORTING ON THE PENDING TALKS, THE NIHON KEIZAI ON NOV. 17, FRONTPAGED AN ARTICLE THAT SAID IN PART, "IT IS INEVITABLE THAT IT (THE U.S.) WILL FACE THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH AN EXTREMELY SEVERE ATTITUDE ..." THE ASAHI EVENING NEWS WROTE THAT, "OBSERVERS HERE EXPECT RIVERS TO URGE JAPAN TO TAKE DRASTIC MEASURES AIMED AT INCREASING JAPANESE IMPORTS..."

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3. IN CONTRAST, REPORTS FOR NOVEMBER 18 AND 19 WERE VERY RESTRAINED AND BASICALLY FACTUAL. EDITORIALS GAVE MOST ATTENTION TO SADAT'S VISIT TO ISRAEL.

4. NEWS ARTICLES FOR NOVEMBER 20, 21, AND 22 TENDED TO BE RELATIVELY UNBIASED, BUT THE JAPAN TIMES EDITORIAL FOR NOV. 22 SAID THE TALKS WERE "UNUSUALLY

CONTENTIOUS." HOWEVER, THE EDITORIAL GOES ON TO SAY THAT THE U.S. DEMANDS WERE IN LINE WITH U.S. TRADE POLICY DATING TO THE MID-1960'S. THE EDITORIAL SAYS THAT WHILE THE U.S. NEGOTIATING POLICY HAD HARDENED, "THE MAJORITY IN (THE GOJ), INDUSTRY, AND MEDIA... APPRECIATES THE SERIOUS CHALLENGE THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION FACES AT HOME ..."

5. ONLY ONE EDITORIAL, CARRIED IN THE DAILY YOMIURI FOR NOVEMBER 22 WAS DEROGATORY OR INDICATED THAT THE TRADE TALKS WERE ACRIMONIOUS. THE OPENING LINE SAYS, "THE BEHAVIOR OF THE U.S. NEGOTIATORS ... WAS SHOCKING BECAUSE THEY TRIED TO INTIMIDATE AND ALMOST DICTATE TERMS TO THIS COUNTRY (JAPAN)." THE REST OF THE EDITORIAL WAS FAR LESS CRITICAL AND ENDED WITH A STATEMENT THAT THEY BELIEVE THE U.S. REQUESTS WERE BASICALLY RIGHT, BUT THAT UNDERSTANDING WAS CALLED FOR ON BOTH SIDES.

6. TWO LATER EDITORIALS APPEARING IN THE SANKEI, NOV. 23, AND TOKYO SHIMBUN, NOV. 24, CALLED U.S. DEMANDS UNREASONABLE, BUT ALSO CRITICIZED THE GOJ FOR NOT DEVELOPING AN OPEN TRADE STRUCTURE AND FOR MAKING STATEMENTS WHICH RAISE HOPES THEN BACKING OFF FROM THESE AT SIGNS OF DOMESTIC RESISTANCE.

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7. MOST OF THE VERNACULAR ARTICLES HAVE SYMPATHIZED WITH MUCH OF THE U.S. POSITION. THERE IS ALSO SOME CRITICISM OF THE GOJ FOR NOT TAKING ACTION TO ALLEVIATE FRICTION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. REFERENCES TO "UNREASONABLE DEMANDS" TEND TO CENTER AROUND U.S. REQUESTS FOR JAPAN TO GO INTO A TRADE DEFICIT WITHIN A YEAR AND THE U.S. SUGGESTION THAT JAPAN AIM FOR A GROWTH RATE OF 7 TO 8 PERCENT. SOME EDITORIALS HAVE BEEN VERY SUPPORTIVE OF U.S. REQUESTS FOR TARIFF CUTS. MANSFIELD

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
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